DEUTSCHE AFRIKA-LINIEN
JOHN T. ESSBERGER

news

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Photo: Peter Neumann/YPS

Stainless steel chemical tanker "Christian Essberger" (7,705 dwt, 99 m) steaming along the Baltic in top shape. She was built in 2000 – should she soon be too old to trade?

When is a ship old? After 20 years or more?

The economic lifetime of stainless steel chemical tankers is vital when considering fleet renewal and expansion plans – Essberger Tankers have their arguments

Chemical tankers are generally said to have a long service life. A good example is the "Eduard Essberger" (1,540 dwt), built by shipyard Hitzler Werft in Lauenburg/Elbe in May 1968, which was scrapped in 2018 after almost 50 years in service to the day. The ship sailed under the Essberger funnel for 15 years, and then under Greek, Turkish, Panamanian and Maltese flag. Once sold, most ships have a second life as bunker vessels or as tankers for wine, fish oil or salmon feed. Looking at photos of the vessels collected by our archivist Captain Eberhard Stötzner taken in the post-Essberger years, it is obvious that these ships were usually no longer serviced or maintained. However, the quality of their construction was sufficient to allow the vessels to survive for half a century nonetheless, despite their abysmal condition. The "Eduard Essberger" is by no means an isolated case. It could well be that the "Amalie Essberger", a sister vessel of "Eduard" built by Hitzler Werft in 1972, will also reach her 50th birthday, as she is still in service. Both vessels still have coated steel tanks, whereas all but one of the ships in the modern Essberger fleet are chemical tankers fitted with stainless steel tanks.

Over the past few years, there has been a trend for charterers to only employ tankers no older than 20 years. Essberger Tankers feel an economic life time (ELT) of 25 years would be more sensible and have good reasons for this.

This highly important topic for Essberger is the subject matter of the commentary on this page, the interview with Essberger's MD Jan Hammer on page 8, and a technical contribution on the ageing process of tankers from Shipmanagement Director Hartmut Nickel on page 2.

After 50 years in service the ex-"Eduard Essberger" was recently scrapped

Global shipping is experiencing huge technical challenges relating to environmental regulations. The regulations pertaining to the reduction of emissions from ship engines is a major issue. Satisfactory technical solutions will involve immense costs for the shipowners. For us environmental protection has top priority. Incidentally, the majority of our vessels, namely the chemical tankers are already using more expensive, low-sulphur, environmentally friendly fuel.

However, Essberger Tankers are also tackling other technical requirements, not dictated by the international authorities but by our charterers. These regulations particularly concern the age of chemical tankers, which is by some customers limited to a maximum of 20 years. Based on Essberger's almost 100 years of experience in tank shipping, we do not share our clients' scepticism. In fact, we find it counterproductive. Our chemical tankers receive extensive maintenance at precisely timed inspection intervals. With their outfit of stainless steel tanks and manifolds, these ships are in equally good condition as newbuilds even after 20 years in service. Many Essberger tankers that have left our fleet have easily reached an age of 40 years.

From a technical and financial point of view – this tanker type involves vast investments – we believe a service life of at least 25 years would be more sensible and appropriate. One must also bear in mind that the number of registered accidents has decreased significantly and that most of these incidents are due to human error. Accordingly, our training programmes for crews are regarded as exemplary.

Yours Heinrich von Rantzau

Nothing is treated as “not my job”

SSHEQ is the abbreviation for “Safety, Security, Health, Environment and Quality” / By Captain Dietrich Wulff

Essberger Shipmanagement’s SSHEQ crew: Captain Vladimirs Smirnovs, Captain Mert Daggecen, Mr Cornelis Veldhuizen-Dijkstra, Ms Maj Reger, Mr Georg Fröhlich, Mr Mate Turcinov, Captain Dietrich Wulff (left to right)

From a one-man-show only some years ago SSHEQ has grown into a department of now nine employees and is a vital part of Essberger Shipmanagement under MD Hartmut Nickel.

The commitment of Essberger Shipmanagement to sustainable development as a strategic priority encompasses the dedication to SSHEQ. As there are no greater priorities than the safety and health of our seafarers, colleagues, contractors, customers as well as the protection and preservation of the environment, Shipmanagement is committed to excellence in managing these areas through our safety, security, health, environment and quality SSHEQ function.

The five main functions of the department are enhanced by responsibilities for monitoring and implementing appropriate measures to safeguard the safe navigation of the fleet, deck and cargo-related operations and finally, liaising closely with our customers to meet their expectations and aiming to ensure that our vessels remain suitable for transporting their cargoes. The SSHEQ department works closely with the shipboard management, other departments as well as our customers to ensure that the company has deliverable policies, is proactive in its risk management and professional in implementing corrective and preventive actions. The colleagues of the SSHEQ department always search for improved solutions and processes which would allow the company to perform more efficiently. It includes adopting the attitude that every single person within the department is responsible and that nothing is treated as “not my job”. It is everyone’s duty to ensure that all information is delivered to the employee who is responsible for the follow-up. Excellence can only be achieved through open and transparent communication. If ever achieved, a belief in having the best policies, procedures and tools, however, means nothing unless put into practice. The achievement of the company’s objectives requires active participation from all employees of the company in a continuous process of measurable improvement. The SSHEQ department encourages input from employees, customers, suppliers and other external stakeholders because they work on the front line, have first-hand experience and knowledge of what does not work efficiently or may go wrong.

In addition to the above, SSHEQ is primarily responsible for:

- Promoting a robust safety culture and environmental awareness within the company;
- Ensuring that the strategic direction, processes, standards and documentation are established, implemented, maintained and improved in compliance with the never-ending release of increasingly stringent rules and regulations as well as customer requirements;
- Monitoring the safety and pollution prevention aspects of the operation of each vessel;
- Performing vessel visits, providing reports upon their completion and ensuring effective follow-up of observations and promulgation of best practices and lessons learnt to the fleet;
- Ensuring the promotion of awareness for customer requirements throughout the company;
- Managing a vetting service including arranging vetting and customers’ inspections, communicating with customers regarding those inspections, initiating and monitoring status of corrective actions;
- Providing support to the company for the implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of the company’s management system and achieving our short-, mid- and long-term goals;
- Managing the certification of adopted codes, standards and conventions such as the ISM Code, the ISPS Code; ISO 9001 (quality management systems) and ISO 14001 (environmental management systems).

The SSHEQ department is supported by our training masters Jan van der Form and Paulo Santos providing onboard training to our seafarers and conveying key messages to our fleet.

How CAP can help a ship to stay fit

Corrosion and fatigue are monitored with the Condition Assessment Programme – CAP / By Hartmut Nickel

Generally there are two important parameters concerning a vessel’s “age”. Due to their chemical composition, most metals, including shipbuilding steel, have a tendency to oxidise. Oxidisation can occur in many different ways. For iron and ferrous steels this oxidisation process is known as rust. The metal gradually corrodes from the outside in and turns into iron oxide. To prevent the corrosion process, shipbuilders use high-strength steel, corrosion protection, coatings, etc. The vessel’s condition thus depends on the treatment of the steel, and the ageing process increases exponentially as a result of lower corrosion prevention measures. In practice, classification societies use various different inspection methods to assess the vessel’s condition, ranging from visual inspections to detailed steel thickness measuring. The condition is then assessed at regular intervals (annual surveys/interim surveys every 2-3 years / class renewal every 5 years).

Another parameter is the fatigue of metals, which also applies to shipbuilding steel. Environmental factors, such as mechanical loads, changing temperatures, UV rays, etc. and exposure to corrosive mediums have a harmful effect on the metal. Fatigue in shipbuilding steel means that a statically non-critical load can lead to functionality failure (fatigue cracking) or even complete failure (fatigue fracturing). This is why cyclically loaded parts have a limited service life, and service life assessments/calculations based on the recorded steel thickness measurements are also performed while the vessel is still in service in order to estimate the relevant part’s expected durability. Many oil companies require service life expectancy assessments as part of the CAP survey (condition assessment programme) once the vessel has been in service for 15 years.

DALSA celebrates on a riverboat tour

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of DAL Schiffahrts-Agentur (DALSA) Hamburg and Bremen, DALSA invited many customers to take a tour on a Weser riverboat, thus stressing the particular importance of the Bremen office. Was it a success? Yes, it was. Look at the images with so many happy faces

In the name of Managing Owners Dr Eberhart von Rantzau and Heinrich von Rantzau Hartmut Lühr, MD Deutsche Afrika-Linien, made a welcoming speech to the audience on board the riverboat “Oceana” on the River Weser

Joachim Holst and Tyrone Smith (both LIC)

Anja Wiechel (AMA Freight), Sylvia Bräkling-Stümer (DALSA), Felix Lenné (DALSA), Felix Wohlers (DALSA)

Henning Ley (Jumbo Transport), Thomas Massmeyer (Lexzau), Michael Ley (Alfons Köster)

Jasmin Krokat (EAF Sea Cargo), Kirsten Albers (Pfaff), Felix Lenné (DALSA)

Lynn Krumtünger (DALSA), Anja Varges (Miru & HJS), Frank Seifert (Miru & HJS)

Nicole Hemmelskamp (K+N), Birte Burmeister (K+N), Yvonne Burghardt (K+N), Marc Streuer (DALSA), Sabrina Biniasz (K+N)

Tatjana Wiebke (Kopf&Lübben), Peter Janssen (Peter Harms)

Jürgen Vopalenski (BLG), Ina Welmert (BLG)

Stefan Loew, Antje Hadrys, Carola Ouattara (all World Net)

Werner Lüeße (JAS), Gisela Lüeße (JAS), Susanne Lampe (Dachser)

Nora Ristow (Gefco), Michela Horvat (IFB), Torsten Dahl (BHS), Kai Längert (IFB)

"Our people make the difference"

10 years' DAL Agency in South Africa – DAL News spoke to Roger Philip, Branch Manager in Port Elizabeth

DAL NEWS: Roger, you've been working for DAL Agency (Pty) Ltd. right from the start in 2008. In January 2012, you joined the Port Elizabeth team.

RP: Yes. I am very fortunate to work with a team of six people. Samantha Wainwright took on the role of Import Controller. Zuki Tushe is our Export Controller, Carolyn Nell has a demanding portfolio of Mercedes Benz component exporters. Imtiyaaz Gajjar is our Import Controller. Since Simone Burman's career path has always been in sales, she holds the position of Sales Executive. Marine Maritz joined us as an import controller and was then promoted to Freight Supervisor.

DAL NEWS: As one of the five DAL Agency offices spread around South Africa, how much interaction do you and your team have with the other offices?

RP: Being the conduit for containers moving to inland destinations and, a more recent development, being the alternative discharge port for vessels that have to omit the Cape Town first call, we communicate quite extensively with all of the other offices. Because of the Eastern Cape being automotive dominant the Port Elizabeth and East London offices tend to keep in close contact with each other.

DAL NEWS: Port Elizabeth effectively now has two ports, the old port close to the city centre and the new port of Nquara in the industrial development area of Coega. What are the main commodities moving through these ports?

RP: The old port handles a more diverse mix of cargo, there is a bulk manganese terminal, a ro-ro terminal for car carriers, a commercial fishing boat harbour and, of course, the container terminal. Interestingly enough, the port hosts many cruise liners despite there being no facilities for disembarking passengers. Coega Port was essentially built as a transhipment hub for containers. The main commodities moving through these ports are for export: automotive – vehicles / components / parts and accessories –, machinery, textiles, precious metals, agricultural produce including fruit, raw hides and leather, and chemicals. For import: automotive, equipment components and machinery.

DAL NEWS: As you have mentioned, motor manufacturers are a major employer in the Eastern Cape. The major car manufacturers and their suppliers are some of the main customers of the ports of Port Elizabeth. What role does DAL play in the complex logistics chain of these multinational companies?

The Port Elizabeth DAL Agency team: Roger Philip, Simone Burman, Carolyn Nell, Imtiyaaz Gajjar (back row), Marine Maritz, Samantha Wainwright, Zuki Tushe (front row)

RP: DAL have built up an enviable reputation for service delivery and this is reflected in the number of containers moving on DAL bills of lading for the various vehicle manufactures and the component exporters. We provide a diversity of logistics solutions from port-to-port shipments to door-to-door, and everything in between. We have transhipment containers moving from East London to Port Elizabeth on the SAECS Lines dedicated feeder service and offer all truck services from various inland locations to Port Elizabeth and Cape Town for export to Europe. Of course, automotive is not confined to northbound cargo, we also play an important role in the automotive containers that come into South Africa. We have containers moving to East London by feeder vessel and, when urgent, by road transport. Both for export and import automotive business, DAL's ability to provide value added and flexible business solutions is our strength.

DAL NEWS: After the opening up of the DAL Agency organisation in South Africa the company was successful right from the start. What is the secret of this success and what are you doing better than your competitors?

Market leader in terms of customer service

RP: Without a doubt it is our people that make the difference. We have dedicated staff who understand our customers' business and who truly believe that customer service is vital to our success. While most of the shipping lines have opted for centralisation, the DAL Agency strategy has always been to provide a personalised and customer-focused service. Our customers appreciate this approach and consider DAL to be the market leader in terms of customer service. Where our competitors struggle with invoice accuracy, ease of bookings, inflexible systems and outsourced functions, we pride ourselves on providing all the right ingredients for a one-stop logistics solution.

DAL NEWS: The city of Port Elizabeth is also known as the "Windy City" and not far from the city the coastline is called the Wild Coast. Please, tell us more about the weather in this part of South Africa.

RP: Interestingly enough, statistically Durban is the windiest South African city although, if the past year is anything to go by, Cape Town has earned the right to claim the title of the "Windy City". Climate change is a reality and weather patterns of a few years ago are not as predictable now. Traditionally our windy season is during the winter months and normally the winds calm down during the summer. Currently the Eastern Cape is in the grip of the worst drought in years and our dams are at a dangerously low level. We are predominantly a summer rainfall area but do get rain throughout the year under normal climatic conditions. Our climate could be classed as temperate without the temperature extremes that are experienced inland. We do not encounter frost or snow and therefore, under normal rainfall conditions, our countryside remains green throughout the year. Heading up the coast from Port Elizabeth to the Wild Coast it becomes more subtropical with hot, balmy conditions and high rainfall.

Both Port Elizabeth and East London are popular holiday destinations due to the mild climate and the Eastern Cape coastal belt has earned the title of the "Sunshine Coast".

DAL NEWS: You lived many years in the vibrant city of Johannesburg. How would you describe life in Port Elizabeth and what are the pros and cons of life in this city and part of South Africa?

RP: Vibrant it may be in Johannesburg but it depends how much one enjoys this "vibrancy". Statistically Johannesburg has a far higher crime rate than Port Elizabeth and this equates to a less stressful living environment in the Eastern Cape. On average, it takes me 12 minutes to travel to or from the office. To travel the same distance in Johannesburg peak traffic can take an hour or longer! Of course, we have the sea and our beautiful beaches right on our doorstep and the diversity of some beautiful areas such as the semi-desert Karoo only a few hours' drive away. From a work perspective, a port office presents its own unique challenges that I never experienced in Johannesburg. 24/7 is a reality and timeframes are normally very tight as delaying a vessel in a port can be a costly exercise. To answer your question, I really can't think of too many cons as the pros of living in Port Elizabeth definitely dominate!

"We understand the African way"

DAL News spoke with Dave Kirkman, Branch Manager of DAL Agency in East London

DAL NEWS: Dave, you have been working for DAL Agency (Pty) Ltd. since 2010.

DK: I had previously worked for Safmarine in East London for many years and was part of the SAFDAL joint venture organisation. The East London office was established mainly to look after our very important customer Mercedes Benz of South Africa (MBSA).

DAL NEWS: You run the smallest of the DAL Agency offices however, it has an important function in the overall DAL set-up in South Africa.

DK: We have a relatively small team. Debby Flashman and Cindy Busse came from a background of having worked in the SAFDAL era to serve MBSA. I am really blessed to have them both in the team as well as Denise Bradley (ex-Saftainer) who assists us with admin and reception. Debby is the freight controller for both inbound and outbound cargo, Cindy focuses mainly on imports. I liaise with our VSA partners, in particular Safmarine and with MBSA, as well as managing the branch activities.

DAL NEWS: East London is a small port compared to Durban and Cape Town.

DK: East London is the only true river port in SA built in the mouth of the Buffalo River. Interestingly, on 4 July 1896, the DOAL vessel "Herzog" arrived in East London to discharge German-sourced cargo amongst which was the first car ever to be imported into South Africa, the "Benz Velo" ordered by a coffee merchant based in Pretoria. That was the start of our group carrying the Daimler automotive cargo to South Africa! The other commodities in East London apart from automotive are chemicals, raw material for the automotive sub-suppliers and exports of pineapples to South America and some to Europe. The maximum vessel size here is as follows: LOA 285 metres, beam 34 metres and draft 10.4 metres. DAL serve East London with a weekly service in transhipment via Coega/Port Elizabeth. Together with their SAECS partners DAL operates a 1,000 TEU geared feeder vessel which arrives in East London from Coega every Friday and departs every Tuesday for Port Elizabeth to connect to the main SAECS vessels to/from Europe.

We have built a team nationally

DAL NEWS: How much do you suffer from strong winds the Cape region is known for?

DK: Our prevailing wind is SW and we do experience strong winds particularly during the months July to September. Fortunately, we use ships' gear to discharge and load containers and the feeder vessel is not so exposed so we can safely continue working up to gust speeds of up to 40 knots.

Small team, maximum success: Dave Kirkman and his dedicated crew members Debby Flashman, Cindy Busse and Denise Bradley

DAL NEWS: What is the secret of the success of the DAL Agency?

DK: Firstly, we have managed to build a team nationally of experienced passionate people, who still understand the value of providing a personalised service to our customers in a world where many of our competitors have resorted to outsourcing their core operational functions to remote areas of the globe. Business is conducted in a unique way in South Africa, which is nowhere near ready for the clinical automated way of communication that might now be more common is some parts of the world. Here we still chat about braaivleis, rugby and sunny skies before we get into the business side of our discussions. Our teams understand the South African way and we have fun while we work – fantastic "gees", this means "spirit" in African parlance.

DAL NEWS: For many years you worked for Safmarine, DAL's former partner in South Africa. What does working for DAL mean to you?

DK: Working for DAL is really a great privilege as the DAL brand values personal input, freedom to share one's views and ideas, as well as rewarding excellence and the way we interact with management and troops in the engine room.

DAL NEWS: How long have you been living in East London? How would you describe life there and what are the pros and cons of life in this town?

DK: I arrived in East London in 1987 to manage the branch agency for Safmarine. East London is a great place to run a shipping agency as everyone gets hands-on experience in every aspect of our business from sales to operations, husbandry, marine insurance, maritime law, general average, arbitration, salvage, charter parties and more. The climate is pleasant, the community is friendly and has a great sense of humour. We also have an amazing race circuit from the 1930s and as a passionate motor racer this is a huge benefit to me personally.

On scene

On 28 August 2018, an Essberger Tankers team from the Hamburg main office travelled to the Borealis refinery in Porvoo/Finland to attend the annual performance meeting in one of our major customer's plant. Dressed in full safety gear the "Essbergers" obviously enjoyed a tour around. We see Henrik Althoff (4th from left), Dierk Herrmann (6th from left) and Anne Tautorat (2nd from right).

Whereabouts

October 2018

Ship's name	Master	First Mate	Chief Engineer
Agnes Essberger	Robert Waldon	Orhan Akyildiz	Saturnino Yuson
Alcedo	Adolph Kamphuis	David Jones	Jelle Spoelstra
Amalie Essberger	Krzysztof Osuch	Marcin Madry	Stefan Tudorache
Anneliese Essberger	Jan Buisman	Tim Hastir	Jan Lodder
Annette Essberger	Thierry Micha	Els Impens	Roel Tichelaar
Ardea	Arnoldus Van Groenestijn	Marcus Klein	Oebele Kooistra
Caroline Essberger	Albertus Linthorst	Eriks Ciblis	Dionysius Jannink
Christian Essberger	Robert Szmaj	Deniss Andrejevs	Miroslaw Jaworski
Dutch Aquamarine	Jeroen De Koster	Krzysztof Maniecki	Hendrik Van Schoonhoven
Dutch Emerald	Louis Kint	Pieter Labee	Hendrik Berg
Dutch Faith	Sander De Bos	Chris De Boer	Jan Sonneveld
Dutch Spirit	Theo Keizer	Deniss Tatarinovs	Geert Sap
Eduard Essberger	Enrique Lopez	Evgeniy Buzyrev	Sergey Panishev
Ellen Essberger	Adam Incewicz	Adrian Kuzmicz	Artem Glushko
Elsa Essberger	Lukasz Antczak	Mareks Satkovskis	Lukasz Zeromski
Georg Essberger	Jacek Borysiuk	Piotr Adamski	Guilherme Bacelar
Gisela Essberger	Dariusz Swierkosz	Rafal Garbacz	Marek Ptasznik
Helga Essberger	Maciej Randak	Daniel Szarzynski	Pavel Semyonov
Johann Essberger	Mariusz Borek	Daniel Kubacki	Valerii Mersiianov
John Augustus Essberger	Jaroslaw Spors	Quirino II Agot	Valeriy Bashkurov
Koralia	Jose Jr Subradil	Samuel Ruedas	Dony Merwoto
Liesel Essberger	Boguslaw Olbrys	Damian Rechnio	Leonid Volkov
Lisa Essberger	Stephanus Frerichs	Mark Van Den Heuvel	Arnoldus Eland
Lucy Essberger	Leonardus Kanters	Gerben Bosscher	Stefan Kluijfhout
Maersk Launceston	Mariusz Pleskacz	Rafel Nones	Andrzej Szyca
Patricia Essberger	Maciej Kaminski	Marcin Harasim	Grzegorz Topolewski
Philipp Essberger	Andrei Malenkov	Tomasz Rembisz	Piotr Kret
Ubena	Konstantin Kveselevich	Angie Mae Cagud	Ilarion Sorin Chirtes
Ulanga	Pavlo Klyuyev	Marcelo Borbon	Gleb Kolechkin
Ursula Essberger	Cornelis Lodder	Wojciech Nowak	David Roele
Wilhelmine Essberger	Jan Ten Wolde	Cornelis De Snaijer	Johan De Jong
Selinda (under new management)			
Swakop (under new management)			
Zambesi (under new management)			

Aus der Reederei-Familie

Jubiläen

25 Jahre

Herr Andreas Bachler, *DALSA Bremen*, 01.10.1993

10 Jahre

Herr Jaroslaw Krok, *C/O*, 02.09.2008
Herr Dr. Ricardo Alvarez, *DAL*, 15.10.2008
Capt. Stefan Grabowski, 18.11.2008

Besondere Geburtstage

85 Jahre

Herr Siegfried Rakow, 04.10.1933

80 Jahre

Capt. Eberhard Stötzner, 19.09.1938
Herr Horst Pohl, 19.10.1938
Herr Carl-Heinz Mohren, 25.11.1938

75 Jahre

Herr Friedrich-Karl Faber, 09.09.1943

70 Jahre

Frau Erika Beyer, 05.10.1948

65 Jahre

Herr Hendrik Berg, *C/E*, 22.10.1953
Frau Angelika Lindner, 26.10.1953

60 Jahre

Capt. Jaroslaw Maciuk, 22.10.1958
Capt. Albertus J. A. Linthorst, 18.11.1958

50 Jahre

Herr Stephan Prieß, *Ship Management*, 16.09.1968
Herr Jaroslaw Krok, *C/O*, 29.10.1968

Neue Mitarbeiter an Land

Herr Emre Arsin, *DSA Düsseldorf*
Frau Claudia Garofalo, *Hammonia Reisebüro*
Herr Daniel ter Haseborg, *MTI*
Herr Dragutin Jelovcic, *Crewing*
Herr Máté Kalina, *DSA Stuttgart*
Frau Pamela Rosenkilde, *Finance/Accounting/Tax*
Herr Demhay Tekie, *DSA Stuttgart*

In den Ruhestand tritt

Frau Karin Kreiensen, *Liner Accounting*, 30.09.2018

Wir gratulieren zur Geburt eines Kindes

Herrn Daniel ter Haseborg
– Smilla ter Haseborg (28.08.2018)

Geheiratet hat

Herr Gerrit Haller (18.07.2018)

Ausgelernte Auszubildende an Land

Herr Max Ludwig Meyer-Loos, *JTE*
Herr Godwill Sarpey, *DAL*

Neue Auszubildende an Land

Herr Lars Deemering, *DAL*
Herr Jonas Rückert, *JTE*
Herr John Wagner, *DAL*

Wir gedenken

Herrn Wolfgang Lübbers (77 Jahre)
Juli 2018, ehemals JTE

Photo: Axel Steinbach

Georg Maximilian and Ann-Mari von Rantzau walking happily after the wedding at the church in Hamburg-Nienstedten

Wedding in the von Rantzau family

Georg Maximilian marries Ann-Mari (née May)

On 8 September 2018, Georg Maximilian, 34, Heinrich and Annette von Rantzau's second eldest son, was the first of their three sons to get married. His wife is Ann-Mari, née May. The young couple's ceremony at the registry office already took place in May. The church wedding was held in Nienstedten in Hamburg, the von Rantzau family's "home church", so to speak.

The wedding was celebrated at the Weißes Haus on Elbchaussee, with an Austrian-style bachelor party on the first and the official family reception on the second night, before the couple headed off on their honeymoon. Having completed his university degree and professional training, Georg Maximilian von Rantzau founded his own shipping company in Hamburg. He shares his father's passion for hunting and country life, and thus enjoys spending his free time in the rural parts of Schleswig-Holstein and Styria in Austria. His wife Ann-Mari comes from Itzehoe in Schleswig-Holstein and is likewise familiar with country life, not least because of her love of horses. She works in real estate.

In the name of all the staff, DAL/JTE News wishes the couple all the best and a happy future.

And the winner was...

The Deutsche Afrika-Linien/John T. Essberger Prize at the 150th German Derby in Hamburg on 7 July 2018 was presented by the Group's CFO Lutz Weber this year. The winner was six-year-old gelding Santiano, ridden by jockey Martin Seidl and owned by Parodie Stables. Mr Weber attended the derby with his wife Ulrike. At the prize-giving they were joined by the Chairman of the Hamburg Turf Club, Eugen-Andreas Wahler (l.), and the Vice-Chairman, Albert Darboven.

Poland vs Philippines 2:0

The chance to do sport on board a chemical tanker is limited and mostly restricted to workouts in the gym. However, on board the "Liesel Essberger" the crew can also play table football. On 8 September 2018, the crew under Captain Boguslaw Olbrys played a tournament of Poland against the Philippines, which was won by Poland. Almost every crew member took part. It was great fun and another tournament will follow soon. We see the participants standing behind the pitch.

Welcome on board

Three new apprentices have joined our Group to start their training programmes. They are, from left to right, Lars Deemering, 19, from Hamburg, at DAL, Jonas Rückert, 18, from Ravensburg, at Essberger, and John Wagner, 19, also from Hamburg and also at DAL. Lars is a keen judoka and enjoys travelling, Jonas plays handball and was an exchange student in Sweden, Spain and France, and John is a strength and track athlete and participated in a school exchange programme in India.

"In fact any age restrictions below 25 years are counterproductive"

In an interview with DAL/JTE News John T. Essberger's MD Jan Hammer gives his viewpoint on quality and safety

DAL/JTE NEWS: Age restrictions are applied by some of our charterers for acceptance and use of stainless steel chemical tankers. In most cases we are currently talking about an accepted lifetime of up to a maximum of 20 years. Do these measures ensure a higher degree of safety and quality in respect of chemical transport?

JH: No, I don't think so. But to address this question it is important to be aware and understand the complexity of chemical tankers and tanker economics in general. I am talking about ship management, the commercial operations, chemical tanker features, costs, their economic lifetime, the way they are traded, the existing regulations of international authorities, individual customer rules, consequences for the environment and last but not least, John T. Essberger's background as a pioneer in the tanker trade with almost a century of experience.

DAL/JTE NEWS: Let's start then. What do you understand under "operations"?

JH: Chemical tankers are built with the ability to handle different types of cargoes simultaneously, that being bulk liquid chemicals, edible oils, petroleum products, lubricating oil, etc. – and to constantly change to other and new cargoes. Each voyage therefore often means different types of cargoes. The ships are built to be able to strip and clean the tanks between each voyage and new cargo entry. Some will go as far as to say good chemical tanker operations are a matter of being effective with respect to tank cleaning. To make this possible, the ships are equipped with individual pumps – one for each cargo tank –, vapour return lines, advanced cleaning machines, nitrogen generators for tank blanketing, a boiler for steam generation, heating coils, and with tanks made of stainless steel. Needless to say, chemical tankers are very expensive to build when seen in comparison to other vessels of similar size.

Jan Hammer is Managing Director of Essberger Tankers, a company with almost 100 years of experience in the tanker business

Photo: Michael Zapf

DAL/JTE NEWS: How expensive?

JH: In today's market a 6,500 dwt stainless steel chemical tanker would cost about USD 20-24 million, approximately the same as a 37,000 dwt handysize bulker, whilst a 40,000 dwt stainless steel chemical tanker would cost USD 60-80 million, almost as much as a 350,000 dwt very large crude carrier (VLCC). In other words, stainless steel chemical tankers cost as much as simpler vessels with a carrying capacity between six and nine times larger.

DAL/JTE NEWS: What is the age at which such a chemical tanker becomes too expensive to justify further trading?

JH: From a shipowner's or an investor's point of view, the question of economic life time (ELT) is indeed essential. It is a big and complex subject, but in short can be described as the age at which point the maintenance becomes too expensive to justify further trading. Significant, of course, are the market prospects. But other important factors are the design and outline specifications and the original workmanship such as the quality of steel and paintwork. These factors can differ substantially from one ship to another, and from one yard to another. Historically seen and in general, however, the typical ELT for stainless steel chemical tankers is between 25 and 30 years. Chemical tankers are expensive because they have – and must have – very expensive components with long age expectations. This being the case, owners naturally aim for longevity, and spend more money and resources on keeping and maintaining their fleet, the result being ships that are far from worn-out and from ready for demolition at 20 years of age.

DAL/JTE NEWS: What is the main challenge associated with age restriction as applied today?

JH: The main challenge is that the rules and requirements vary from charterer to charterer. Complementary to the already existing high demands of international authorities such as SOLAS and MARPOL, charterers have in recent years introduced and are now enforcing additional individual rules and requirements such as their own vessel inspections (vetting) and crew requirements. A specific ship may be fully OK for one charterer, but unacceptable for another. This is the situation today. Even worse is the uncertainty that prevails with respect to the future.

DAL/JTE NEWS: Have the aims of introducing this "20 years" policy been achieved?

JH: The statistics are clearly indicating that accidents and misperformance at sea are caused by people and can very seldom be attributed to the age of ships or their equipment. I dare say, in fact, that the lowering of the age limitations from 25 years when it comes to stainless steel chemical tankers has caused no known or documented improvement of safety and quality of the transport. It is also an interesting fact in this context that some of the chemical companies that do not operate with age restrictions seem to have a better safety record than those that do.

DAL/JTE NEWS: You are aiming at a common industry-wide restriction of 25 years for stainless steel tankers?

JH: Yes, I will continue to argue that any restriction below 25 years does not make sense, does not contribute to better safety or quality and, in fact, is counterproductive and causing uncertainty for owners when it comes to their fleet renewal and expansion plans. Owners are today forced to base their investments on a 20-year life expectancy, which obviously brings the economics in the wrong direction. The consequences of a shorter ship's life expectancy will be lower quality, minimal margins and less outfitting and automation. We are against this "buy-and-throw-away culture". I think we all agree that this is not what the world expects of us today. The safest solution would be if our customers contributed to bringing the chemical tanker industry towards common rules and regulations, including what I propose: an age limitation of maximum 25 years for stainless steel chemical tankers.

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